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Multimedia Creation in the Small Campus Library

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Metaliteracy

Metaliteracy involves the learning and creation of information.¹ Often applied in the context of social media, metaliteracy has wider applications to a variety of information literacies, including media literacy. In order to be considered metaliterate, each person is required to have an understanding of their literacies and actively pursue improving their learning. Metaliteracy can be applied throughout a person's life; in fact, to be metaliterate, one must be able to utilize this knowledge outside of the traditional academic environment. Metaliterate individuals both evaluate and create information that is often shared in participatory online environments.^{2,3}

Active Learning

Active learning requires students to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize materials. Active learning has been discussed in educational literature since at least 1987. As more Millennials entered classrooms, educators began recognizing the unique needs of this generation, many of whom are digital natives. Instructors began shifting their teaching models to create learner-centered environments. One learner-centered model, called the flipped classroom, developed during this period.⁴ To improve metaliteracy among students via library instruction, many librarians are turning to an active learning model of instruction rather than merely providing students with a walk-through of subject databases or library catalogs. After all, students will be engaging with information long after they have graduated from college, and many may not have access to the expensive resources they enjoyed during their academic years.

Role for Librarians in Content Creation

To support metaliteracy instruction, educators, including librarians, have to provide materials relevant to students' needs.⁵ Due to their position as both liaisons and teachers, librarians are natural candidates for creating tailored content for their institutions. Librarians understand the needs of other instructors at their institutions, as well as the desires of the students served by their organizations. Making information literacy instruction materials available online in multiple formats allows students to engage with lessons prior to coming to class, to view workshop materials at convenient times, and to reconsider librarians as content creators. Videos are one example of the instructional materials libraries can create.

Videos in Flipped Classrooms

To improve "one-shot" research instructions, where librarians are invited to visit a class for a single teaching session, I have applied the case studies from the two metaliteracy texts by **Jacobson** and **Mackey** to create a flipped classroom model for engaging students in active learning. In the format I prefer to use, an instructional lecture is provided first for students, who complete it as part of pre-class homework, typically in conjunction with a research assignment from their professor. Having students engage with the basics of information literacy prior to class allows valuable in-person instructional time to be spent entirely on actively developing literacy skills through access, evaluation, and discussion of resources. To facilitate this instruction, I created videos introducing how to search for electronic resources through the library website and how to evaluate materials based on the **Clark College Libraries A.S.P.E.C.T. Checklist**.⁶

Additionally, my colleagues and I have created videos for use in classes and workshops, as attendance at our library brown-bags can be low, and students express a desire to learn about the concepts on their own time and from a librarian. These videos cover topics including copyright basics and creation of a professional digital presence. We have also created materials on-demand for faculty members about issues students seem to have difficulty grasping, such as authorship and copyright.

Lessons Learned

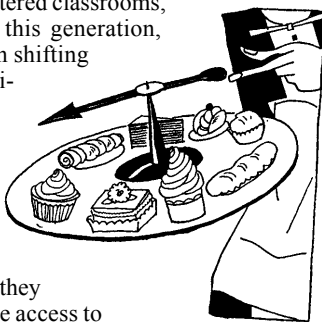
Librarians need to have ample resources in order to create videos for instruction. Materials can vary in cost from high-performance video editing software to a librarian's personal smartphone. The time commitments for researching, writing, recording, and editing a video are perhaps the greatest challenge, especially in a small library. If librarians have no professional experience creating or editing videos, it can take some time to develop these skills. Fortunately for this librarian, I had helpful colleagues and a supportive administration to assist as I learned basic recording and editing skills.

While a high level of input is needed to create content, the benefits of doing so are enormous. Time spent in creating media is saved by avoiding repetitive lessons with the same students having to attend all of them, or in presenting to small or nonexistent audiences at poorly attended workshops. Students do not always utilize the pre-class materials, but later display an improvement in engagement with resources after receiving comments on their coursework and noting their metaliteracy deficiencies. Creating quality multimedia resources, especially ones that focus on concepts rather than specific resources, means these videos can be used for extended periods of time.

Future Plans

Currently, I am sponsoring a new undergraduate student research journal, with students leading the initiative and engaging with every step of the research publication process from concept to peer-review to publication. In the first semester of the journal tutorial, students engaged weekly with various aspects of publishing, typically involving a combination of readings and lectures. In the future, as students concentrate more on recruiting, editing, publishing, and marketing content in the journal, the materials will become a resource library rather than part of a weekly instruction session. These will be stored in the learning management system at the library, perhaps as a publicly available resource.

Our library would also like to include meaningful assessment with library-created videos. This may take the form of brief exercises watchers would complete before and after engaging with the multimedia. We would also like to support students in creating their own videos on information literacy topics. Doing so would improve their metaliteracy through the active learning process of researching, making, and distributing a video. 🐼



Endnotes

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